7. Pekong Peo
8. Nadaun
9. Chauntra
10. Daramsala
11. Keylong
12. Kaza
13. Kullu
14. Khera
15. Banjaru Tissa
16. Sundernagar
17. Teara
18. Tauni Devi
19. Mohra
20. Nurpur
21. Karsog
22. Ghumarwin
23. Chowki Minar
24. Bakloh
25. Bilaspur
26. Hamirpur.

Tempering of metres by MTNL officials

74. SHRl SATISH PRADHAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that MTNL officials have been apprehended by police for tempering with the metres;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the beneficiaries of this offence are regular international telephone callers; and

(d) if so, what action Government pro pose to take against such persons?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) A few cases have been detected in Delhi and Bombay, where meter readings were manipulated for the benefit for subscribers and meter wires were found disconnected. Two officials of MTNL, Delhi and five officials of MTNL, Bombay have been apprehended by the CBI and these officials have been placed under suspension.

(c) This will be known only after the CBI complete their investigation.

(d) Action as per law will be taken by the CBI in respect of outsiders and disciplinary action will be taken against the officials of MTNL as per rules.

Privatisation of telephone system in the country

75. SHRI VITHALBHAI M. PATEL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state.

(a) whether it is a fact that Govern-ment are considering privatization of telephone system in the country;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(c) what are the names of the companies which have shown interest for privatization of telephone system?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) to (c) No Sir. At present no proposal is under consideration of Govt, for privatisation of telephone system in the country. As such the question of furnishing details in this regard along with the names of the companies having shown interest in the matter does not arise. However, certain value-added services like Electronic Mail Ser vice, Cellular Mobile Telephone Services, Paging services, Videotex, Video Conferencing, Voice Mail, Data Services (via satellite), Direct Access Code Dialling, Audiotex etc. have been opened up for private sector participation on franchise[1] basis.

Recasting of National Telecommunication Policy

76. SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Na tional Telecommunication policy is being recast and the thrust of the new policy will be on the involvement of the private sector in basic services including rural networking; and

(b) if so, what are the details of the new policy?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) and (b) The National Telecommunication Policy is still under consideration of the Government.

Telephone services in Delhi and other cities of the country

77. SHRI SATYA PRAKASH MALAVIYA:
SHRI ANANT RAM JAISWAL:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have formulated any solid plan to control day to day rising complaints of telephone services to Telephone holders/consumers, particularly with number 198 in Delhi and also in other cities of the country; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof and what action has been taken or is likely to be taken to improve the telephone services being rendered to the consumers/telephone holders in Delhi?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) Yes Sir.

(b) The clearence of faults booked on 198 is being monitored at the highest level to ensure the repair of telephones in the shortest possible time. Plans have been formulated for extending computerisation of Faults Repair Service to all major exchange centres.

Steps taken to improve the telecommunications services are given in the enclosed statement.

Statement

Steps taken *to* improve telecommunication Services

1. Telephone Exchanges and Media:

(a) introduction of Electronic Exchanges.

(b) Introduction of Electronic Taxs

(c) Introduction of Electronic Transit exchanges.

(d) Phasing out of old and life expired electromechanical exchange*.